



RHODE ISLAND  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL  
MANAGEMENT

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**RESIDENT FINFISH LICENSES**  
**RENEWALS & NEW LICENSE OPPORTUNITIES**

**1. Eligibility:**

- Any Rhode Island resident who held a valid rod and reel, commercial vessel, individual, or miscellaneous pot licenses for the taking of finfish (per RIGL 20-2-27) as of December 31, 2002 may renew their license by obtaining a new Principal Effort License with Restricted and/or Non-Restricted Finfish endorsements, if the data reporting requirements for 2002 have been met.
- In addition to the Restricted and Non-Restricted Finfish endorsements, two other endorsements – Non-Lobster Crustacean and Non-Quahaug Shellfish – will be immediately available upon application.
- A fifth endorsement – lobster – will be issued in March to 50 applicants, prioritized according to the criteria set forth below.
- Students who are residents and 23 years of age or younger may also apply for and obtain new Student Shellfish Licenses.
- Residents who are 65 years of age or older may also apply for and obtain new Over 64 Shellfish Licenses.

**2. Available Licenses and Endorsements in 2003 for Commercial Finfishermen:**

**(1) Principal Effort License (\$150):**

**(a) With Restricted Finfish Endorsement (No Fee)**

- This endorsement allows the holder to harvest and sell all *restricted finfish* species in accordance with applicable regulations. This restricted finfish endorsement category includes and is limited to: *scup, summer flounder, black sea bass, tautog, striped bass, and winter flounder*.
- Vessels may not harvest or sell more than 200 pounds of summer flounder per day without a valid summer flounder exemption permit, regardless of the types of license(s) held by the individuals aboard those vessels.
- For listing of applicable regulations governing finfish, see DEM's website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click "topics" then "marine fisheries"; as well as hand-outs available at DEM's Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.

**(b) With Non-Restricted Finfish Endorsement (\$75):**

- This endorsement allows the holder to harvest and sell all *non-restricted finfish* species in accordance with applicable regulations. This Non-Restricted Finfish endorsement category includes all finfish *except scup, summer flounder, black sea bass, tautog, striped bass, and winter flounder* (or *in addition to* the six restricted species if both endorsements are obtained).
- For listing of applicable regulations governing finfish, see DEM's website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click "topics" then "marine fisheries"; as well as hand-outs available at DEM's Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.
- For applicants who wish to obtain this endorsement instead of the Restricted Finfish endorsement, there is no fee for the endorsement.

**(c) With Non-Lobster Crustacean Endorsement (\$75):**

- This endorsement allows the holder to harvest and *sell all species of crabs* in accordance with applicable regulations. This endorsement *does not allow the taking of lobsters*.
- For listing of applicable regulations governing horseshoe crabs and other crab species, see DEM's website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click "topics" then "marine fisheries"; as well as hand-outs available at DEM's Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.

**(d) With Non-Quahaug Shellfish Endorsement (\$75):**

- This endorsement allows the holder to harvest and sell *all shellfish species except quahaugs* (or *in addition to quahaugs* if both endorsements are obtained) in accordance with applicable regulations.
- For listing of applicable regulations governing soft clams, oysters, mussels, scallops, etc., see DEM's website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click "topics" then "marine fisheries"; as well as hand-outs available at DEM's Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.
- For applicants who wish to obtain this endorsement instead of the Quahaug endorsement, there is no fee for the endorsement; and if such applicants are at least 65 years of age as of February 28, 2003, the \$150 license fee shall be waived.

**(2) Commercial Fishing License (Entry Level) (\$50)**

**(a) With Lobster Endorsement (\$25):**

- *Only 50 new lobster endorsements will be issued for 2003.*
- This endorsement allows the holder to harvest and sell lobsters and *set a maximum of 100 pots*.
- For listing of other applicable regulations governing lobsters, see DEM's website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click "topics" then "marine

fisheries”; as well as hand-outs available at DEM’s Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.

- Endorsements will be issued according to the following priority system.
- Highest priority will be assigned to *existing resident license holders who have been actively fishing their license and resident lobster boat crew members who while not licensed have been actively participating in the fishery as employees of licensed fishermen.*
- In order to achieve priority, license holders must have fished at least 50 days in 2002 as documented by dated landing slips; and crew members must have participated in the lobster fishery at least 50 days in 2002 as documented by an affidavit submitted by their employer.
- License holders and crew members will be further prioritized based on the length of time they have actively fished their license or actively participated in the lobster fishery. Again, the standard for “active fishing” or “active participation” is 50 days in a calendar year.
- The next lower priority category are *resident crew members in any Rhode Island commercial fishery who have been actively participating in the fishery*, prioritized against each other according to the same standards described above for lobster boat crew members.
- The next lower priority category is *any other Rhode Island resident.*
- If there are more eligible applicants than available licenses in any category, licenses will be issued by lottery.

**(3) Student Shellfish License (\$50):**

- Applicants must be full-time students; for applicants between the ages of 17 and 23, their student status must be demonstrated by a notarized letter or transcript from their school.
- Applicants must be 23 years of age or younger as of February 28, 2003.
- This license enables the holder to harvest and sell *quahaugs at the following basic harvest levels*: 3 bushels/day outside management areas and 1.5 bushels/day within management areas.
- For listing of other applicable regulations governing quahaugs, see DEM’s website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click “topics” then “marine fisheries”; as well as hand-outs available at DEM’s Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.

**(4) Over 64 Shellfish License (No fee):**

- Applicants must be 65 years of age or older as of February 28, 2003.
- This license enables the holder to harvest and *sell quahaugs at the following basic harvest levels*: 3 bushels/day outside management areas and 1.5 bushels/day within management areas.
- For listing of other applicable regulations governing quahaugs, see DEM's website ([www.state.ri.us/dem](http://www.state.ri.us/dem)) and click "topics" then "marine fisheries"; as well as hand-outs available at DEM's Office of Boat Registration and Licensing.

**3. When and How to Apply:**

- New licenses and endorsements for 2003 will be available between January 1, 2003 and February 28, 2003. Renewals may be obtained beginning December 16, 2002. Applications may be made in person at DEM during regular business hours up to the close of business on February 28, or sent to DEM via mail with a postmark no later than February 28, 2003. *The Department cannot accept any applications for the 2003 license year, including renewal applications, after February 28, 2003.*
- Applicants for the lobster endorsement must submit their applications, along with any supporting documentation, by February 28, 2003; however, the endorsements will not be issued until after February 28. Only those applicants who receive an endorsement will be charged a fee.

**4. Information to be Provided with Each Application:**

- Full name
- Age
- Occupation
- Residence address
- Mailing address
- Weight
- Height
- Hair color
- Eye color
- The name of any state or jurisdiction in which your commercial fishing license and/or permit is currently revoked or suspended
- Driver's License number and state of issuance, or other state-issued photo identification card
- Primary gear type you intend to employ (non-binding)
- Signature

**5. Declaration of Any Vessel Employed in the Commercial Fishery:**

- All vessels engaged in commercial fishing in Rhode Island waters must be declared annually with the Department in the form of a Vessel Declaration *before* they are so employed. This declaration requirement is in addition to the vessel registration requirement.
- If an individual employs more than one vessel in commercial fishing, each must be declared.
- The following information must be provided for each vessel declared:
  - Name of owner
  - Name of vessel, if any
  - Registration and/or federal permit number
  - Length overall
  - Horsepower
  - Displacement
  - Gear type(s)
  - Principal fisheries in which it will be deployed
  - Number in crew
- The fee for each vessel declaration is:
  - \$25 for vessels up to and including 25 feet in length overall.
  - .50¢/foot for each whole foot over 25 feet.
- Owners of declared vessels less than 25 feet long may obtain a license plate that may be used on another undeclared vessel less than 25 feet in length, allowing that other vessel to be temporarily employed in the commercial fishery for a period of up to 60 days. The fee for this license plate is \$15/year.